

CLAIMS

1. A method for filling recessed micro-structures at a surface of a semiconductor workpiece with copper metallization comprising the steps of:  
  
depositing a copper layer into the micro-structures with a process generating copper grains that are sufficiently small so as to substantially fill the recessed microstructures;  
  
subjecting the deposited copper to an annealing process at a temperature below about 100 degrees Celsius.
2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the copper is deposited using an electroplating process.
3. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein an electroplating waveform is used, at least in part, to ensure sufficiently small copper grain size.
4. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein an electroplating solution additive is used, at least in part, to ensure sufficiently small copper grain size.
5. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the annealing process is carried out at ambient room temperature.

6. A method for filling recessed micro-structures at a surface of a semiconductor workpiece with metallization comprising the steps of: depositing a metal layer into the micro-structures with a process generating copper grains that are sufficiently small so as to substantially fill the recessed microstructures; subjecting the deposited metal to an annealing process at a temperature below about 100 degrees Celsius.
7. A method as claimed in claim 6 wherein the metal is deposited using an electroplating process.
8. A method as claimed in claim 6 wherein an electroplating waveform is used, at least in part, to ensure sufficiently small metal grain size.
9. A method as claimed in claim 6 wherein an electroplating solution additive is used, at least in part, to ensure sufficiently small metal grain size.
10. A method as claimed in claim 6 wherein the annealing process is carried out at ambient room temperature.

11. A method for filling recessed micro-structures at a surface of a semiconductor workpiece with copper metallization comprising the steps of:
- providing a semiconductor workpiece with a feature that is to be connected with copper metallization;
- applying at least one dielectric layer over a surface of the semiconductor workpiece including the feature;
- providing recessed micro-structures in the at least one dielectric layer;
- preparing a surface of the workpiece including the recessed micro-structures with a seed layer for subsequent electrochemical copper deposition;
- electrochemically depositing a copper layer to the surface of the wafer to substantially fill the recessed micro-structures;
- allowing the electrochemically deposited copper layer to self-anneal for a predetermined period of time at ambient room temperature;
- removing copper metallization from the surface of the workpiece except from the recessed micro-structures, said removing step occurring after the predetermined period of time has elapsed.
12. A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the predetermined period is greater than about 20 hours.
13. A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the step of preparing a surface of the workpiece comprises:

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applying at least one barrier layer over the dielectric layer; and  
applying a seed layer over the barrier layer.

14. A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein the step of applying the seed layer is defined by applying the seed layer using a chemical vapor deposition process.
15. A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein the step of applying the seed layer is defined by applying the seed layer using a physical vapor deposition process.
16. A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the step of preparing a surface of the workpiece comprises:  
applying at least one adhesion layer over the dielectric layer; and  
applying a seed layer over the adhesion layer.
17. A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the step of removing the copper metallization is defined by removing the copper metallization using a chemical mechanical polish technique.

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18. A method for filling recessed micro-structures at a surface of a semiconductor workpiece with copper metallization comprising the steps of:
- providing a semiconductor workpiece with a feature that is to be connected with copper metallization;
  - applying at least one dielectric layer over a surface of the semiconductor workpiece including the feature;
  - providing recessed micro-structures in the at least one dielectric layer;
  - preparing a surface of the workpiece including the recessed micro-structures with a seed layer for subsequent electrochemical copper deposition;
  - electrochemically depositing a copper layer to the surface of the wafer to substantially fill the recessed micro-structures;
  - removing copper metallization from the surface of the workpiece except from the recessed micro-structures;
  - allowing the electrochemically deposited copper layer to self-anneal at ambient room temperature without subjecting the workpiece to a separate and distinct elevated temperature annealing process.
19. A method as claimed in claim 18 wherein the step of preparing a surface of the workpiece comprises:
- applying at least one adhesion layer over the dielectric layer; and
  - applying a seed layer over the adhesion layer.

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20. A method as claimed in claim 18 wherein the step of preparing a surface of the workpiece comprises:

applying at least one barrier layer over the dielectric layer; and  
applying a seed layer over the barrier layer.

21. A method as claimed in claim 20 wherein the step of applying the seed layer is defined by applying the seed layer using a chemical vapor deposition process.

22. A method as claimed in claim 20 wherein the step of applying the seed layer is defined by applying the seed layer using a physical vapor deposition process.

23. A method as claimed in claim 18 wherein the step of removing the copper metallization is defined by removing the copper metallization using a chemical mechanical polish technique.

24. A method for filling recessed micro-structures at a surface of a semiconductor workpiece with copper metallization comprising the steps of:

providing a semiconductor workpiece with a feature that is to be connected with copper metallization;

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applying at least one dielectric layer over a surface of the semiconductor workpiece including the feature;

providing recessed micro-structures in the at least one dielectric layer;

preparing a surface of the workpiece, including the recessed micro-structures, with a seed layer for subsequent electrochemical copper deposition;

electrochemically depositing a copper layer to the surface of the wafer to substantially fill the recessed micro-structures;

subjecting the electrochemically deposited copper layer to an annealing process at a temperature below about 100 degrees Celsius.

25. A method as claimed in claim 24 wherein the step of preparing a surface of the workpiece comprises:

applying at least one adhesion layer over the dielectric layer; and

applying a seed layer over the adhesion layer.

26. A method as claimed in claim 24 wherein the step of preparing a surface of the workpiece comprises:

applying at least one barrier layer over the dielectric layer; and

applying a seed layer over the barrier layer.

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electrochemically depositing a copper layer to the surface of the wafer to substantially fill the recessed micro-structures;  
subjecting the electrochemically deposited copper layer to an annealing process at a temperature below which the low-K dielectric layer substantially degrades.

31. A method as claimed in claim 30 wherein the annealing step takes place at a temperature corresponding to a baking temperature of the low-K dielectric.

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